

REMARKS

Claims 1, 7, 8, 11, 13, and 18-21 are pending

Claim Rejections

A. The Examiner has again rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Asakura et al.* (US 5,808,260, hereinafter "*Asakura*").

In the October 2, 2006 Amendment, Applicant argued that when comparing the contact of electrodes 8 and 9 with the conductor 3 of Figures 6 and 7 of *Asakura*, it is shown that the conductors 8 and 9 actually contact the rounded upper surface of the alleged conductor. Further, Figure 1 of *Asakura* merely discloses that "one" of the two electrodes (i.e., electrode 6) contacts the alleged flat surface of the conductor. Claim 1 specifically recites that "said electrodes" (plural) contact with the flat surface. Since *Asakura* fails to disclose that both of the electrodes 6 and 7 of *Asakura* contact with the flat surface of the alleged conductor and discloses that the electrodes 8 and 9 both contact with the rounded surface of the alleged conductor, Applicant argued that claim 1 is patentable over *Asakura*.

On pages 14-17 of the *current* Office Action, the Examiner has provided a response to the above arguments. Particularly, on page 14 of the Office Action, the Examiner maintains that *Asakura* crimps the terminal and conductor in the same manner as the prior art of Figures 5-7 therein. Applicant notes, however, that in Figures 5-7, the top surface of the crimped portions are rounded in a heart-shaped pattern with only the bottom surface being substantially flat. The Examiner also maintains that Figure 2 of *Asakura* "clearly" discloses the conductors as being

flat. However, Figure 2 shows the top portion of the conductor 3a as having the rounded heart-shaped configuration, which is the same as the prior art of Figures 5-7 therein.

The Examiner then refers to Figures 8 and 12 of the present invention and maintains that the conductors of Asakura are more flat than the conductors shown in the Applicant's figures. Figures 8(a) and 12, however, show a flattened top and bottom portion of the conductors in the manner set forth in the claims (i.e., flat at portions that come in contact with the electrodes).

As shown in Figures 2, 6 and 7 of Asakura, the top surface of the conductor is crimped into the curved heart-shaped configuration. Furthermore, as shown in Figure 1, the electrode 7 contacts the non-crimped portion of the conductor 3a. Applicant submits that the non-crimped portion of conductor 3a would remain even more rounded than the heart-shaped crimped portion. Therefore, while the electrode 6 of Asakura may arguably contact a flattened surface, the electrode 7 clearly does not contact a flattened surface, where claim 1 requires that both electrodes contact the flattened surface.

Similarly, the electrodes 8 and 9 of Asakura both contact the top surface of the conductor. In particular, one electrode contacts the curved heart-shaped top surface and one electrode contacts the non-crimped, curved top surface. Accordingly, neither of the electrodes 8 and 9 of Asakura contact the flattened bottom surface of the conductor.

On December 18, 2006, the undersigned conducted an Interview with the Examiner in which the above features/arguments were discussed. Although no agreement was reached, an amendment was discussed with regard to the "surface" of the conductor that comes into contact with the electrodes. The discussed amendment, regarding the recitation of an "entire surface,"

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has been set forth in the current Amendment. Applicant submits that Asakura fails to teach or suggest the claimed feature.

At least based on the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the current rejection of claim 1 in view of Asakura.

B. The Examiner has rejected claims 7, 11 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Asakura*.

1. Claim 7

Since claim 7 contains features that are analogous to the features recited in claim 1, Applicant submits that claim 7 is patentable over Asakura for at least analogous reasons as claim 1.

2. Claim 11

Independent claim 11 recites that the pair of electrodes is shaped to weld and apply pressure to each of the groupings of conductors and contacts “at the same time.”

The Examiner cites to column 4, lines 45-62 of Asakura and maintains that such portion discloses that the electrodes 8 and 9 can move so as to weld a plurality of contacts and conductors. However, as specifically recited in claim 11, the pair of electrodes weld the groupings “at the same time.” In the October 2, 2006 Amendment, Applicant noted that the electrodes 6-9 of Asakura are disclosed as being tapered and narrow at the tips (col. 5, lines 21-

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24). Accordingly, Applicant argued that the electrodes 6-9 are not capable of welding a plurality of groupings of the conductors and contacts at the same time.

In response to the above argument, the Examiner maintains that the left and right portions 2a in Asakura disclose two contacts, while the core wire 3a is actually made of a plurality of wires, such that a plurality of portions are contacted (pg. 15 of Office Action). Even if Applicant assumes *arguendo* that the Examiner's interpretation is accurate, the portions 2a and 3a are bundled together and therefore form one "grouping." Applicant submits that one skilled in the art would not view the combination of elements 2a and 3a as "multiple" "groupings." Such interpretation would be entirely unreasonable.

At least based on the foregoing, Applicant submits that claim 11 is patentable over the cited reference.

3. Claim 18

Since claim 18 is dependent upon claim 1, Applicant submits that such claim is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

C. The Examiner has again rejected claims 8 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Asakura* in view of *JP 60-50079* (hereinafter *JP '079*).

1. Claim 8

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Claim 8 contains analogous features as recited in claim 1. Since JP '079 fails to cure the deficient teachings of Asakura, in regard to claim 1, Applicant submits that claim 8 is patentable for at least analogous reasons as claim 1.

2. Claim 19

Since claim 19 is dependent upon claim 1, and JP '079 fails to cure the deficient teachings of Asakura, in regard to claim 1, Applicant submits that claim 19 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

D. The Examiner has rejected claims 13 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Ozai* (US Pub 2003/0065625, hereinafter *Ozai*) in view of *Asakura*.

Since claims 13 and 20 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, Applicant submits that the rejection of such claims is now moot.

E. The Examiner has rejected claim 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Ozai*, *Asakura* and JP '079.

Since claim 21 has been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, Applicant submits that the rejection of such claim is now moot.

F. Newly Added Claims

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By this Amendment, Applicant has added claims 22-28 to provide more varied protection of the present invention. Applicant submits that Asakura at least fails to teach or suggest that both the formation of the flat surface of the conductor *and* the welding of the flat surface of the conductor to the contact, is performed by the same device, i.e., the electrodes.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

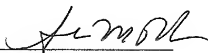
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